A. W. W

Dublin November 11. 1848

My dear friend

The Box — our grand annual box — is gone on its way to Boston. A mighty little one it is. There are several reasons for this. There are very few workers or donors — very few who care a pin for the Anti Slavery cause, and as we in Dublin think it better to send the best value we can for what money we can spare, we have this year invested nearly all our mites or pounds in the purchase of a ~~large~~ quantity of De la Rue's beautiful stationery which, to save expense, we have directed to be sent direct from London to Liverpool & thence to Boston so that we shall only see our donations with the eye of faith. As to the Box I have just now left it at the Steam Company's stores it is a ridiculous little thing — but at all "as big as a bureau" as your niece Lizzy declared a former mission of ours ~~[illegible]~~ was. I must tell you that amongst all our anti slavery friends in Dublin, James Haughton's daughters are the most distinguée in point of standing — they are a little bit aristocratic, rather exclusive, and one shape their aristocracy takes is a strong desire to send their own gifts alone — in a ~~th~~ separate box by themselves. As they are not very much used to business this disposition ~~takes~~ has rather an awkward result for they generally send all they have to send in an envelope 2 or 3 times as big as there is any necessity for, & so as to incur an amount of expense in the freight nearly if not quite equal to the value of their gifts. As my wife and myself are always the packers & forwarders from Dublin we have on more than one occasion taken the law in our own hands in this particular — and have opened the ~~parcel~~ Haughton's parcel, repacked the goods & discarded the envelope. We did so this time — if we had not, you ~~#~~ wd have had to pay for double freight which would have been very disagreeable both to you and to us. You will find all that the Haughtons have sent, in the largest brown paper bundle in the box, and directed as from them — excepting some wax work

The box is directed to Anne W. Weston, care of Francis Jackson, Boston, U.S.A.

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articles (also from them) which my wife packed in a shabby little basket for greater security. It will be a mercy if they arrive safe. I tell you all this that, ~~you may~~ whilst you appreciate our motives for contravening their wishes, you may be so far our abettors as to say nothing to them about it. You will perceive that the things they send are such as bear packing very well - and that the wax articles are as safe as such things can be made for such a voyage. If you publish any account of the fair & include in it a sugar plum to any individual donors (which I do not recommend) I hope you will say a good word for the Miss Haughtons for they might be the better of a little blarney, while we can get on very well without it. [Here you very naturally remark to yourself - How wonderfully magnanimous these Webbs are!]

At the bottom of the box is a flat brown paper parcel containing an oil painting on panel of ~~an~~ a nocturnal eruption of Vesuvius and 4 Water Colour Drawings of Naples & Vesuvius. I picked these up lately for a trifle. I think the Painting worth 6 or 8 dollars and the water colours say 10 dollars for the 4. The last were done in Naples and (I am told by those who have bought the like there) give a good idea of what they represent. I know it is giving trouble ~~unnecessarily~~, but if you could easily manage to let me know whether they sold and how they sold, I should be glad.

At the top is a patch-work silk table cover - hexagon shape. This was put together by a cousin of mine, Lizzy Poole, of whom you have perhaps heard. She got married lately, and while the event was in anticipation she kept her hands out of mischief by the patch work. When she had gained her point in this particular she made it over to the Bazaar and Susanna Fisher bound it all round, and Hannah Webb lined it and fringed it as you see and Maria Waring gave 2½ dollars towards these expenses - altogether it cost about 5 dollars independent of the patch work - so this will enable you to price it and I hope to sell it. I think if sent out to the far parts of Wisconsin or Missouri or Iowa it might sell well to the squaw of some White Cloud or Little Fox or the like

The hardware goods were all begged yesterday morning from a friend of ours — a young widow — who gave them very cheerfully. Her husband sent some things last year, which we heard sold very well. They are all marked with the selling price here. I hope you may get twice as much. The donor is sister of your staunch friend Eliza Wigham of Edinburgh. She was left with 5 young children and one of the finest Sheffield and Birmingham Warehouses in Dublin. I was well pleased that Hannah had even such good success — for it is very little success we do meet with on behalf of the fair. In a general way, we find it easier and pleasanter to give ourselves than to ask from others — so little interest exists on the subject.

I suppose you know that your sister Maria and I have an account always current between us. I hope before this letter goes to send you the next statement. I am only ~~[illegible]~~ waiting for ~~Thomas~~ De La Rue's account ~~for~~ of the Stationery, & the charges for ~~[illegible]~~ forwarding the box. They sent me word that it amounts to about £28. We only ordered £25 worth — but they ~~do~~ generally exceed their commission. Whatever discount they allow for cash, or if there be any drawback on the duty, you shall of course have the benefit of it. You will observe that I take credit for a balance of £6-11-1½ due me at last settlement. You must only take this on my honor — or if your sister left the accounts in your hands, you can clear up the mystery without being driven to lean on such a reed.

You will find in the box a little one filled with Sea Weed Baskets. Of these the 6 shabbiest came from Waterford last year, and as they are so very frail, & we knew nothing of the value set on them in America, we did not send them. When I saw your sister, she incented me into their money value, & accordingly I now send them, bad & good, along with 4 more which we picked up here. But we have ordered £5 worth of them to be sent direct from Cork, where they make them in superior style — and these I expect will sell to our mutual satisfaction. I w'd also like to know how the sea weeds we send have borne the voyage.

Some crannies at the top of the box are filled with ~~[illegible]~~ old books—in small type—such as used to delight my youth. They will probably sell for all they cost (I don't mean the marked price) and that is all I look for. They are sent as filling up. We always endeavour to make our parcel suit our room as nearly as possible—no—I mean the reverse—~~to~~ we always cut down our box to the size of its contents.

Pursuant to your request that all donations should be sent by the middle of this month, I wrote to Cork—but am sorry to find that they will not be able to be ready till the 2nd December. They are not very prompt, and as they like to have a previous exhibition of their gifts, they prefer not sending any till all are ready. I offered to send any they had ready, but they refused on this account. They sent a parcel to Manchester—so did the people in Belfast; and these, with any anti Slavery contributions from Manchester, were sent to Rochester. I believe they did not amount to much altogether. Very little ~~[illegible]~~ came from Belfast last year, and that little went in our box. Unfortunately you did not perceive that they were marked on the parcels as from Belfast; and when they found no acknowledgement of their gifts, they were I suppose a little huffed. At any rate the principal contributors there are personal friends of Douglass, who think more of him than of the cause—so do of Manchester—and so, I might almost say, of Cork. Besides, the Manchester & Belfast people were directly acted on by Maria Webb (a connexion of my own) and Anna Richardson (who was the means of buying Douglass's freedom) and these are great anti Garrisonians and Pro Liberty Party partisans. They tell me their box from Cork will not be much if any thing less than last year.

I am sure you must, in your secret soul, think me a great Dolly to be so fussy about ladies' work—but there is absolutely nobody else to do the fussing & the writing which must be done ~~[illegible]~~
~~[illegible]~~

You will oblige me by taking a note of the request I sent some time since that a Liberator sent to Dr. Gough—or Susanna Fisher—or R. C. Fisher, Limerick. (I don't know which precisely) should be dis as far as I know —

continued - only one goes there, and that one is to be stopped! If it should happen that James Fisher Limerick takes the Liberator, don't stop him. He is another body entirely.

I think I told you of a Miss Jessie Holland that I met with at Leeds, who is an energetic labourer for the Bazaar. She told me she would be glad to get a Liberty Bell for some children in a school she teaches - who work for the Fair. I told her I would mention it. Any such gift is greatly increased in value by containing some autograph - yours will do very well - something stating it to be from the Ladies of the Massachusetts A.S.S. or the like.

As to the Liberty Bell you see how little I could do for you, tho' I did my best consistently with a regard to my personal safety. Our literary people care little for the cause - they know little of it - and whenever they are apparently well known they make too much by their brain to be ready to give the product for nothing. You are aware that the proprietors of the English Annuals (when they were in vogue) paid largely for all their contributions. As far as I know there is extremely little enthusiasm in any good cause among our literati. Their most thrilling effusions smell of the shop. I know hardly an exception except Harriet Martineau's ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~. Then she consorts with very great people - the nobility & such like - and those who do, don't like to have much to say to little ones, who hardly ever saw a lord in their lives.

I often wonder in myself at the loss people suffer who know little & care little for the American Anti Slavery cause and its upholders - But so it is - we who do sympathise with you are a mere handful - ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~. There is no one thing I rejoice in more than my intimacy with "your honours". If people of note had had the same ambition, I could not have been so fortunate - for the like of me w^d have been lost amid the throng

- Among the articles in the box are the following. They are marked with the numbers I prefix to my notes

(1) a pair of Bracelets made by the widow of the late Gen. Dobbes & valued at 1½

(2) 3 very neat Pincushions, the work of Irish poor (as you say the work of the world Indians — & sometimes there is no great difference in our favour) There are from Maria Waring — and are valued at 1 dollar each

(3) Childs Frock 75 cents (4) Bugle Collar 50 cents (6) Pincushion 50 cents

(5) Emery Pincushion from Mary Elizabeth Webb, a little girls gift.

(7) 3 pair Babies Socks — (Irish poor) ½ dollar each

(8) 6 Collars — Real Limerick Lace — 75 cents each

— The Round Berlin wool Turkish cushion — 4 dollars — made by Maria Waring

— Square Cushion, block pattern, from Margaret Fisher, Limerick, 2 dollars

— The Hexagon Table Cover I find is valued at 10 dollars — the materials cost m

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It is now Friday Nov. 17 — I have held this letter over till today — hoping that I would know from London & Liverpool the cost of freight & that I could get the invoice of the Stationery to send you — but they have not come. Delarue's traveller told me that on the each parcel of articles in the invoice they would write the description — & if the invoice dont come today & I think you had better not open the box till it arrives, for I will send it next week. If you opened it without the in you would probably confuse them.

You see this is a long business letter & by no means delightful. You must only live in hope for better times

There are a few articles sent unmarked, as they were of small value, & you can easily affix a price — How pleasant if some of us could be with you to help to mark & arrange, now that your hands are fewer — but no doubt there will be plenty of willing hands, glad to give their aid, though none can supply the place of your absent travellers.

I had a note this morning from your only contributor in the poverty stricken province of Connaught — Miss Henzell of Carrick on Shannon. She wants to know if a contribution from her will be in time — and I will tell her yes — for I will send it on to Cork. Some of the little things in our box were sent by her too late for last year.

I have just got a letter from Liverpool saying that the broker will do but deferring the statement of exp. till next week — so I may as well send off the letter in time

Yours ever truly

Richd D Webb

Ms. A.9.2.24.49